

"I have been against this war since day one. I am outraged by the president's attempts to escalate the war. I want this war to end now and bring our troops home immediately. I mourn the loss of the 3,228 American dead and countless Iraqi civilians and extend my deepest sympathies to all the families.

"Whether we like it or not, the bill before the House today is the first serious, binding legislation to come before the House since the war began four years ago that contains benchmarks and a timeline for withdrawing our troops. This bill brings our troops home.

"Even so, in my opinion, this bill does not go far enough. I think it should prohibit U.S. military action against Iran without explicit Congressional authorization. I wanted our troops to come home yesterday.

"But the alternative to this bill is not acceptable. A supplemental without benchmarks and timelines is just 'stay the course'. A 'no' vote will not bring the troops home any sooner. In fact, it gives the President a free pass to continue his war without end.

"As a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, war is against everything I believe in. I have dedicated my career to finding solutions through peaceful, diplomatic means. I hate this war.

"The President must change course and this bill forces him to do so. We will turn the corner on Iraq. I have received thousands of letters and calls from my district both in support and in opposition to this bill. The overwhelming sentiment of all these calls is that we must end this war. Voting 'yes' on this bill was the first step to doing that, to ending the war, to bringing our troops home."

*H.R. 1591 passed the House by a vote of 218-212. The president has threatened to veto it.*